United Nations S/2012/790

Security Council

Distr.: General
25 October 2012

Original: English

Letter dated 25 October 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Further to my meeting with you yesterday, I would like to convey to you that the Yarmouk military factory in the capital of my country, Khartoum, which produces traditional weapons and ammunition, was subjected to aerial bombardment by the Israeli Air Force in the early hours of Wednesday, 24 October. The bombardment led to the death of two civilians and seriously injured a third person.

The Government of the Sudan condemns in the strongest possible words this barbaric aggression, which stands as a stark violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of the sovereignty of the Sudan.

While conveying to you this heinous act of aggression against my country, we will also keep you informed about the result of the National Committee of Investigation on the matter and would expect the Security Council to take appropriate measures accordingly.

You are kindly requested to circulate the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daffa-Alla Elhag Ali **Osman**
Permanent Representative

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Security Council

Distr.: General
1 November 2012

Original: English

Letter dated 23 October 2012 from the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission addressed to the President of the Security Council

At the conclusion of the open debate and informal interactive dialogue, convened by the Security Council on 12 and 13 July 2012, respectively, I indicated that I would summarize the main issues and recommendations emanating from both events, present the summary to the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for discussion and transmit it to the Security Council.

I am pleased to enclose herewith, for the attention of the Security Council, the summary of the discussions held at the meetings of 12 and 13 July 2012 (see annex). The attention of the Council is drawn to the following elements, which, in my view, deserve particular attention and subsequent interaction between the two bodies:

- The emphasis placed by many participating members on the need to renew the sense of collective responsibility of the individual members of the Peacebuilding Commission to contribute to the peacebuilding objectives in the countries on the agenda. This is particularly relevant to States members of the parent organs of the Commission.
- Suggestions were made concerning the areas that would benefit from more dynamic relations between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. These include: the monitoring of the key peacebuilding goals and related tasks in a mission's mandate that are related to priority areas identified by the countries on the agenda in the Commission's instruments of engagement, and the assessment of progress and/or gaps in peacebuilding processes, including the level of national and international commitment and the implications for the transition processes of mandated missions.
- The idea that the Security Council could consider clearer articulation of the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in relevant country-specific resolutions and/or presidential statements, with a view to clarifying the respective roles of the Commission and the missions of the United Nations in the field in their reporting to the Council. The letters that the President of the Council for the month of September addressed to the chairs of the country configurations for Liberia and Sierra Leone, indicating what they were asked to report on to the Council last month, for example, gave a practical effect to this idea.

I take this opportunity to recognize through you, the important contribution that Colombia, as President of the Security Council in July 2012, made to enable the Peacebuilding Commission to tap into the wealth of experience of Member States during the open debate and the informal interactive dialogue. We will continue to

numerous security, political and development actors, with neither a common vision nor effective coordination in place.

In order to achieve its full political potential and to grapple with the serious systemic challenges, the Peacebuilding Commission needs to continually refine its policy orientation and strengthen its institutional mechanisms. At the same time, there is an urgent need for renewing the sense of collective responsibility and commitment from the individual members of the Commission, complemented by political and institutional support from its parent organs.

B. Policy orientation

1. Potential added value of the Peacebuilding Commission

While there are limitations affecting its role and performance, the Peacebuilding Commission could realistically bring added value to the peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations and the international community by:

- Playing a crucial role in political accompaniment of the countries on its agenda.
- Leveraging the political clout of its membership and, potentially, their contributions in support of complex peacebuilding processes.
- Providing a comprehensive perspective on and ensuring that security and development efforts at the country level are targeted to address the root causes of conflict.
- Offering a unique perspective on cross-border and regional peacebuilding challenges.
- Enhancing the overall response and delivery of the United Nations system and the international community in the countries on its agenda.
- Serving as a platform for strengthening coherence in the global peacebuilding agenda by linking together related activities within the United Nations (e.g., civilian capacities, the post-2015 framework) and outside the United Nations (e.g., *World Development Report*).

2. Overarching principle: National ownership and capacity development

The engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission in country-specific situations is based on and supports the principle of national ownership with a view to ensuring long-term sustainability. As such, the Commission should consistently strive to:

- Ensure that affected communities and segments of societies (especially women and youth) fully participate in identifying and shaping national peacebuilding priorities. National actors should be continuously encouraged to lead the way in determining priorities and in designing and implementing national strategies.
- Encourage the development of transparent and accountable national systems to enable aid coordination and management. Facilitate triangular partnerships that support the sharing of expertise in this crucial area.

- Explore modalities to facilitate South-South cooperation by identifying areas requiring technical assistance from countries with similar traditions, socioeconomic structures and experiences.

3. Fulfilling its core mandates and functions

The Peacebuilding Commission should sharpen its focus by seeking practical ways to fulfil its core mandates and functions and by paying particular attention to the following issues in country-specific contexts:

(a) Resource mobilization:

Building on the series of its policy discussions on resource mobilization and, in particular, its most recent discussion on the topic, held on 9 July 2012, the Commission should focus its efforts on:

- Helping the Governments of the countries on its agenda to develop their national resource mobilization strategies for peacebuilding priorities, including through: (i) mapping exercises aimed at identifying gaps in resources and capacities; (ii) the development of viable coordination and aid management systems; and (iii) the sharing of good practices on sound investment and business policies and management of national revenues (including natural resources management).
- Outreach and advocacy with a view to: (i) sustaining attention and commitment from donors and encouraging the alignment of assistance behind national peacebuilding priorities; and (ii) broadening the donor base, including through the engagement of philanthropic organizations and foundations.

(b) Partnerships, coordination and coherence:

- Strengthen partnerships with international financial institutions (e.g., the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund or the African Development Bank) by encouraging joint assessment and complementary programming with the United Nations and bilateral actors around nationally identified peacebuilding priorities.
- Encourage and support the flow of information to operational entities at the country level on priorities, progress, gaps and duplication in peacebuilding assistance.
- Use the periodic reviews of the instruments of engagement to assess and report on the progress, or lack thereof, in the alignment of international assistance behind national priorities
- Explore how peacebuilding objectives and the specific needs of post-conflict countries can be reflected in the post-2015 framework.

(c) Good practices and lesson-sharing:

- Review and disseminate good practices from countries that have passed through peacebuilding experiences to countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission.

- Facilitate peer-to-peer cross-learning and matchmaking in relation to country-specific peacebuilding priorities.

C. Institutional issues

1. The role of the broader membership

As part of the effort to renew the sense of collective responsibility of the individual members of the Peacebuilding Commission, it is important that the membership in the various configurations commit to undertaking certain responsibilities. To this end, the membership is expected to:

- Take on specific tasks, ranging from political advocacy to technical and financial support to countries on the agenda. Members with embassies in these countries should be given special responsibilities in these areas.
- Leverage the political clout of the principal organs (for members that are drawn from the membership of these organs) in support of activities of the Commission (e.g., in the area of coordination).
- Speak with one voice on the governing bodies of relevant United Nations and non-United Nations operational entities with a view to bringing about coherence in the work of those entities in the countries on the agenda.

2. Chairing the country configurations

The leadership role of the respective chairs is crucial in guiding the work of the country configurations and therefore their selection merits careful consideration:

- There is a need for introducing greater clarity regarding roles and responsibilities of the chairs and the membership of the country configurations, including through terms of reference.
- There is a need to recognize that there is a country dimension to chairing of a country configuration by which, when a country decides to provide a chair for a configuration, the Government of that country has to adopt a "whole of Government" approach such that high-level officials in various ministries and/or departments of Government and ambassadors can be called upon and required to provide additional support to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.
- The country that the chair represents should ideally have diplomatic representation in the country on the agenda of the Commission. Alternatively, the Commission should identify a mechanism where member States with a presence in the country concerned could provide the chair with access to relevant information on the peacebuilding process and convey authoritative messages.

3. Relations with senior United Nations leadership in the field

The Peacebuilding Commission would benefit from clarity regarding the division of roles and responsibilities between the chairs of the country configurations and the ranking United Nations official in the field. Such clarity would facilitate the establishment of mutually reinforcing relations in a manner that would optimize the implementation of mandates and allow for developing coherent

messages and engagement with national actors. The main action required here is to follow up on the initial meeting between the chairs' group of the Commission and the special envoys/representatives of the Secretary-General, held in May 2012, to clarify and agree on the division of roles and responsibilities (e.g., providing political support to special envoys/representatives of the Secretary-General or agreeing on common messages to the Government and the international community at the country level).

4. Working methods

The Peacebuilding Commission should continue to strive to improve its working methods and enhance efficiency and credibility in conducting its work. Certain areas of its working methods deserve particular attention:

(a) A whole of Peacebuilding Commission approach

- Develop the role of the Organizational Committee, including through periodic interactions with country-specific configurations, with a view to: (i) identifying common challenges and facilitating cross-learning across the various configurations; and (ii) engaging the membership in a policy discussion that could best generate deeper interest and commitment among the wider membership.

(b) Assessment of impact in the field and mutual accountability

- Design the instruments of engagement with a view to strengthening mutual accountability. The periodic reviews need to place much emphasis on reviewing and assessing progress in meeting the commitments agreed upon.
- Strengthen the periodic reviews of the instruments of engagement with a view to assessing the impact and measuring results of the work of the Commission and to help maintain focus on areas of the Commission's comparative advantage.

(c) Differentiated forms of engagements

- Identify options for engagement that should encompass more than the full country configurations, featuring multi-tiered engagement, including regional approaches.

(d) Methodology for engaging stakeholders in the field

- Intensify efforts to identify standing mechanisms through which the Commission can link its activities to those of bilateral, multilateral and regional actors in the field (e.g., enhanced use of joint steering committees).

(e) High-level capital engagement

- Explore innovative ways to engage senior officials from capitals and provide an opportunity to engage institutional partners, non-governmental actors, as well as the senior leadership of lead departments of the United Nations and relevant entities (e.g., consideration of an annual session for the Commission, which would draw on inputs and participation from senior, capital-based officials).

(f) Communications

- Develop a communications strategy in order to give greater visibility to the Commission, explain what it can offer and disseminate awareness about peacebuilding efforts and challenges in countries on its agenda.

II. Relations with the Security Council

A. Overview and key message

The 2010 review of the Peacebuilding Commission concluded that the benefits of an enhanced and more organic relationship between the Security Council and the Commission are increasingly being recognized, and the potential exists to create a new dynamic between a more forthcoming Council and a better performing Commission. The joint membership offers a natural interface that would facilitate the Council in drawing more proactively and regularly on the Commission's advice, which could inform the Council's perspectives and needs.

In order for the Peacebuilding Commission to fully meet its potential, the Security Council is invited to offer greater clarity on what type of advice it seeks from the Commission in its deliberations and in the definition of mission mandates. There are areas and situations where the Council could ideally draw upon specific inputs and advice from the Commission. There are also existing and prospective channels that could facilitate direct information-sharing and interaction between the two bodies.

B. Advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission: scope and channels of interaction

1. Possible areas and situations for advice

The Council could draw on targeted advice from the Peacebuilding Commission to facilitate deliberations and decision-making on mission mandates in countries on the Commission's agenda, including through:

- Clear articulation of overarching peacebuilding goals and related tasks in a mission's mandate (e.g., DDR, SSR, rule of law and national reconciliation) that are related to priority areas identified by the countries on the agenda in the Commission's instruments of engagement.
- Assessment of progress and/or gaps in the peacebuilding process, which could include: (a) the effectiveness of international support to the countries on its agenda; (b) the contribution of United Nations agencies and international financial institutions to peacebuilding tasks and objectives; and (c) the degree of inclusivity and national ownership of peacebuilding in a given country.
- Assessment of progress in the peacebuilding process ahead of consideration of decisions on drawdown and/or transition from one form of engagement by the United Nations to another, which could include: (a) level of support from and commitment of the international community; (b) ways to enhance the capacity of United Nations country teams in order to enable them to continue to support long-term peacebuilding efforts in the countries on the agenda; and (c) country-specific opportunities for and risks to peace consolidation.

2. Engagement by the Security Council

For the Peacebuilding Commission to meet the expectations of its advisory role, the Security Council may consider inclusion in its resolutions and/or presidential statements, or through direct correspondence, of the following:

- Specific requests for advice and/or assessment in any of the aforementioned areas and/or situations.
- Articulation of the role of the Commission in resolutions and/or presidential statements, with particular emphasis on the division of roles, responsibilities and areas of complementarity with the senior United Nations leadership in the field.

3. Channels of interaction

To complement the formal periodic briefings by the chairs of country configurations, more frequent informal, periodic interactions will help the two bodies to manage and strengthen communications and mutual understanding of each other's specific needs and expectations. In particular, interactive communications would enable the Peacebuilding Commission to widen the field of vision of the Security Council across the full range of peacebuilding challenges and actors. Examples of these interactive channels include:

- Country-specific informal interactive dialogues (or formal private meetings), which could take place: (a) ahead of field visits by the Council to countries on the Commission agenda; and (b) in the run-up to mission mandate consideration. The chairs of the Commission could synchronize visits to the countries to precede consideration by the Council of the situations in the countries concerned, so as to bring a distinctive field-based peacebuilding perspective to bear in the discussions of the Council.
- Interactive dialogues with a view to reviewing and addressing broader systemic issues of mutual interest, including in connection with the consideration of the annual report of the Commission, as appropriate.
- Exchange of letters with specific requests from the Council or communicating country-specific information or analysis by the Commission.